Published Articles of Chandramowly

DH Avenues

Wednesday, April 21, 2004

Leadership Competency Series

Human Side of Quality

Audit-analysis and controls-consequences are two sides of quality triangle, which is supported by the base line - Total Quality Mind, says M R CHANDRAMOWLY.

A house building contractor who had made a fortune, building houses, told his supervisor of 35 years, "I am going to build one last house and you will build it for me, because I will be gone for a year. Use best material - money is no consideration, make it as the greatest house we have ever built." Having given the instructions, the contractor left. The supervisor thought this was the great opportunity to make money as much as possible. He used the cheapest materials but made the house look more beautiful externally. After a year, the contractor returned. He inspected the house and asked the supervisor what he thought of the house. The supervisor said, "It is the best house I have ever built." The contractor handed over the deed to him and said, "this is my parting gift to you." On hearing this, the Supervisor was bewildered and breathless.Hidden part of the invisible iceberg is the human side of quality.

Quality is not just an external fineness. It is built around the seed of our intention with "inside-out" approach of rooted moral dimension. Nature is the best source of quality. Nature presents in plenty, be it grain, fruit, milk or flower. It has no "intellect" to moderate and give less. It just gives it out to the world. A cow doesn't add water to milk; it is the man who does it with his mind of grabbing more and giving less. More the human intelligence and innovation, more are the challenges to total quality. A "literate" is called "sA-ksha-ra" in Sanskrit. If the learning reaches pinnacle of selfishness, it loses its natural tendency of giving and is reversed to grabbing of "out-side in", with no concern for quality, he turns out to be a "rA-ksha-sA" the reversed "sA-ksha-ra".

Statistics and state of the mind

During 70s, the word "quality" meant to suggest that it comes from the inspector who stamps the product at final stage of conveyor belt. It is Dr Deming, who institutionalised it saying that quality is every one's job. Integrating every one's mind to quality is the real challenge than rolling out quality processes and standards. Besides the basis of "statistics" there is a need to focus on "state of mind" of individuals. Initiatives such as Total Employee Involvement, kaizen and Total Quality Management (TQM) go in this direction. Success of TQM depends on quality of employees. Emergence of quality employees depends on quality selection process, training quality, making available quality systems/tools and to top it all, the quality leadership.

The competency of TQM is to have the desire to see things done logically, clearly with

an aim of perfection. It is the self-motivated initiative of monitoring and checking work or information, insisting on the clarity of roles and duties, setting up and maintaining information systems. It is the ability to systematically verify each aspect of work to ensure that it is well done. It is learning all the guidelines and procedures associated with and important to one's work; tracking one's own performance on meeting objectives and deadlines.

Competency of a Quality Manager

We observe the Leadership Competency of quality if he/she is dedicated to provide highest quality products and services to meet needs and requirements of internal and external customers. He/she is committed to continuous improvement through empowerment and management by data; is open to suggestions and experimentation; creates a learning environment leading to the most efficient and effective work processes. A Quality Head of a European organisation, an Indian whom I know well, says, "Achieving quality systems in an organisation is a function of collective human behaviour programmed for objective output." He recalls spending extended hours in shop floor to "discover the truth" behind a squarely denied customer complaint. It is his focus on the human side, installing the quality mindset in a team of 17 people changed their paradigm to bring situation under control.

Decision Quality

Quality is not just confined to products and services. It is a homogeneous element of any aspect of doing things with high degree of perfection. Business success primarily depends on the quality of decision-making. Successful Leaders make good decisions based on a mixture of analysis, wisdom, experience, and judgment. Most of such solutions and suggestions turn out to be correct and accurate when judged over time, sought out by others for advice and solution.

Total Quality Mind

Quality Leadership encounters two challenges. Changes/reflection of market AND resistance of people to change. People seldom change, as they are comfortable with their current behaviours. Hence organisations develop a strategy and structure to ensure people change their behaviour using strategic tools and technics, such as Six-Sigma, PCMM or TQM (Total Quality Management). These tools may put in workable process, structure and measurement criteria but the success of TQM-1 depends on TQM- (2) - the Total Quality Mind (concept of Prof S K Chakraborty -IIM, Calcutta).

Motives are individual variable factors underpinned by values. People find emotional satisfaction or frustration depending on whether the organisation situations are motivating or discouraging their value system. A situation of "chocolate" to one can be "charcoal" to another. Psychologists like McClelland, Kelner and Wiinter have found that 80 per cent of daily human mental activity can be related to three motives. The Achievement motive - a concern for excellence and to do things better, Affiliation motive - a concern around establishing, maintaining and restoring relationships and the

third, **Power motive** - a concern for impact or influencing others through knowledge, position, skill or strong emotion. Weaving organisational quality programs with identified specific people motivation cross sectional threads can form the strong fabric of TQM.

Success and quality leadership

Success of TQM1 rests on total quality people who execute planned actions to achieve business success through an internal compass of TQM2. Quality control is an outside-in approach of listing the mistakes. This approach is inadequate to audit TQM2, the inner rudders of the mind and motives. The inside-out approach of quality focuses on touching the heart of the people from where the element of quality actually is generated.

Seven deadly sins of TQM

"Just as life filled with many temptations to sin, so is embarking upon a quality improvement journey" says Michele Scheremerhorn (Intelligent Manufacturing Report April 1997 Vol 14, No.4), naming the seven sins of quality.

Gluttony: Everything is number one priority. No rank of priorities. People watch the way the wind is blowing set priorities as they perceive.

Immediate results: Aiming for "Motorola" results without travelling the ten-year journey Motorola had to travel.

Blame the people, not process: Failing to see the impact of process on employees.

Envy and excuses: Appreciate others with a self-excuse like "You know, it was easy for them to achieve, but we are different and our business is more complex than them."

Greed: First cost versus return: Make million dollar decisions to acquire new equipments don't consider spending equal money on their only renewable assets: the human capital.

Sloth: All talk, no action - many quality initiatives begin with a big bang of unveiling policy, wall mounting it in frames, printing it on business cards and then the business is as usual.

Pride: Do it alone; it is an approach of "who knows better how to run our business than us. We have 30 years experience and are successful."

A quality system by itself cannot produce results. The effectiveness comes out through people with 'Total Quality Mind'. 'System, structure and process of quality' are one side of the quality triangle. 'Controls, audit, analysis, consequences of compliance/non-compliance' are the other side of triangle and both these sides are balanced by the base support line, the 'Total Quality Mind'. Endurance, Patience, Self-control, truthfulness, courage and uprightness are the human values that underpin competency

of Quality Management.

The author is an HR expert and can be reached at cmowly@hotmail.com